All we ever wanted

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All we ever wanted

by BumblebeesAndDandelions

Summary

Will drags Hannibal along on a fishing trip.

Notes

June 9 - | Sprain |

Will was enjoying this maybe a little more than he should be.

They had spent months healing, putting themselves back together. Hannibal called it their rebirth, born anew from the waves. They'd nearly died, both of them, Hannibal from the fall and Will from an infection in his shoulder, but they'd survived.

The French countryside was beautiful in the fall, the turning leaves coloring their entire world in oranges and reds. The dogs loved the house, Will loved the river a mile away, Hannibal… Hannibal just loved Will.

When the peace of their sanctuary grew stale, they would hunt. The city was close enough to allow them a suitable hunting ground, not to mention the other, more mundane ingredients that Hannibal insisted upon. Seeing Hannibal on a hunt the first time felt like a revelation, a gift. He knew how Hannibal felt when he saw Will soaked in blood, wicked delight still clinging to his features. Hannibal had shown him, at length, across most of the house and at the sites of several of their hunts.

None of that, not the fall or the myriad dangers of the hunts, had succeeded in bringing Hannibal low. No, after everything, the reason Hannibal was acting so odd, and was injured, was a failed fishing trip.

Hannibal had grown annoyed at Will's long absences to the river and insisted on coming. Will had told him that if he intended to come, he would be fishing as well. The next day, Will was waist deep in the water, attempting to coax Hannibal in from where he stood on the shore.

"It's water, Hannibal. I've seen you soaked through with blood."

Hannibal frowned, pulling lightly on the strap of his borrowed wafers.

Will laughed at the expression on the man's face, which just made him huff.

"I go hunting with you," he pointed out, grinning.

"One's truest self is revealed in moments of extremity, when they are stripped of every mask and trapping of civility. Seeing you in that state is a gift and an honor, my darling. What state do you believe fishing will reveal?" His lips twitched in amusement, finding this as amusing as Will, even as he played at annoyance.

They both knew Hannibal would do far more than wade into a river for Will without a second thought, but that wouldn't be as fun. Will wanted to drag Hannibal to a river, so Hannibal would make a show of digging in his heels and being dragged. Will did the same for the operas Hannibal adored. They were conjoined at their very souls, and played at separation for their own amusement. So Hannibal, after another minute or so, was stepping gingerly into the river, glaring balefully at Will as he did so.

It was waist deep at the center, the rush of the water deceptively strong beneath its calm surface. Not enough to drown a man, or make it particularly difficult to stand, but enough that

someone unused to its pull might stumble. Combined with the algae slick rocks, Will was treated to the sight of Hannibal making it halfway towards him before flailing and falling sideways into the water.

He shot back up a second later, spluttering.

Will laughed in his face, shaking so hard with humor he nearly dropped his fishing rod. Hannibal's glare was real now, dour and severe, but it just made Will laugh harder. Hannibal looked like a soaked cat, and his waders were full to the brim with river water.

Will didn't have a memory palace like Hannibal did, the old forts in his mind torn down a very long time ago now, but he did commit this sight of Hannibal to memory, saving it and the accompanying emotion gleefully.

Hannibal was, understandably, done with their activity for the day, and Will cut his fishing trip short to walk back with him.

Hannibal immediately stripped out of his waders, causing Will to break into laughter again at the sheer amount of water that poured out of them. All of his clothing was soaked through, the fabric of his 'summer suit' completely ruined.

A grin danced across Will's face their entire journey home, picking their way more carefully in their return. They walked mostly in silence, Hannibal moving stiffly, likely due to discomfort in regards to the water and Will languid and relaxed. Being with Hannibal provided an easy joy and contentment no matter the occasion, watching Hannibal flail like that, though, was a particular delight.

As soon as they returned, Hannibal quickly disappeared into the bathroom, leaving Will to put away his equipment before joining him.

Hannibal was in the shower when Will came into the bathroom, his soaked clothes piled in their bathtub. Will slipped in behind him, winding his arms around his waist. Their shower was chaste, for them, just washing and climbing out.

Hannibal was acting oddly distant, pulling away faster than he would normally, though only by barely a second. Will frowned as he watched Hannibal dry off. Had he truly hurt the man's feelings by laughing? It seemed unlikely- Hannibal delighted in all of Will's emotions, his responses, even, especially, when they came at some personal cost to Hannibal. He'd tried to strangle the man once, in the wake of the night terrors that had plagued him after the fall, and Hannibal had let him, a look resembling fervor across his features.

It took Will watching Hannibal dry, meticulous as ever, to catch it. Bruising, fresh and darkening, ringing his ankle. The idiot was injured, and had, for some reason, attempted to hide it from Will.

"Hannibal," Will started, trying to hold back a fresh wave of laughter over the antics of this ridiculous man. "Darling. Half of my soul. Husband mine. Did you break your fucking ankle?"

Hannibal froze, then dropped the corner of his towel to cover his ankle better, like it would convince Will he'd imagined it.

"No," Hannibal tried. He made a move to dry his hair before apparently realizing that would uncover his ankle, hands dropping back down.

Will worked his tongue over his teeth, staring at Hannibal in disbelief.

"Hannibal", Will repeated, "did you fracture or otherwise injure your fucking ankle?"

Hannibal blinked at the language, used to Will's mouth in more ways than one, and his face worked through several expressions as he tried to find any other way out of this conversation before finally giving up.

"It's sprained, not broken. It will heal perfectly fine in a matter of weeks, mylimasis."

Hannibal practically fled into their closet as soon as he finished his sentence, putting far too much weight on his injured ankle.

He let the man go, allowing him space for the rest of the day while he considered the odd behavior.

They'd had their share of insecurities they'd had to deal with, once they'd finally come together. Injuries, though, were mundane for them. They'd both dealt with them long before the fall, dealt them to each other and helped each other heal. Will had seen Hannibal in a far worse state than this, so if this was some as of yet undiscovered insecurity, Will had no idea what it could be. His half thought out, trailing theories ranged from 'self conscious about ankles' to 'hidden trauma related to being shoved into a river'. Neither seemed particularly likely, given the entire rest of Hannibal. Hell, given how he responded to trauma surrounding being forced to eat a person, trauma with rivers probably would have made Hannibal into an Olympic swimmer or a serial killer with an entirely different shtick.

Hannibal seemed determined to hide his injury, and any pain he felt in relation to it, as he moved throughout the house. He cooked dinner, set the table, and climbed the stairs to their bedroom all without a word of complaint or a noticeable amount of pain. He was hurting though, Will could see through him well enough to tell.

He ran out of patience when Hannibal failed to hide a wince climbing into their bed. He refused to let Hannibal suffer in his odd, self imposed silence.

"No," Will stated, holding the covers taut so Hannibal couldn't climb beneath them, "you're telling me what is going on in that brain of yours, or you're sleeping on the couch. You're injured."

Hannibal's lips twitched into a frown before smoothing and trying for a smile. It didn't look quite right.

"Will, I assure you, I am more than fine. There is nothing unusual 'going on' in my brain at the moment." He tried to pull back the covers again, and Will swatted at his hand.

They both stared at each other, mildly annoyed and at a stalemate.

Will broke the silence first.

“You’re injured, Hannibal. I saw the injury, and I know how you got it. I want to know why you’re trying to hide the fact that you’re hurting. I’ve seen you bleed, Hannibal, what makes this different?”

Hannibal looked away, gaze focused on the brocade curtains he’d insisted on that covered the window. Moonlight shone from underneath them, clawing inwards toward their bed and falling short. He released a breath, and seemed to shrink slightly, allowing himself to become more human, more fragile. A state he allowed himself to be in only with Will, and even then rarely. Will felt himself quiet, attention on Hannibal.

“The first time I saw you covered in blood, I found myself reconsidering much about my worldview, and my plans in regards towards you. Later, you would prove yourself a natural in my chosen pursuit, a worthy adversary and an honored companion. I dragged you into the hunt, eager to see you tear yourself apart, and found myself mesmerized by your savagery. You have taken to every one of my pursuits the same way, a natural born hunter. It… I would be a poor companion if I could not reciprocate that grace and success in your own pursuits.”

Will stared at Hannibal. He understood all of those words, but surely he couldn’t possibly mean what Will thought he meant. Laughing would be in poor taste right now, Hannibal was being vulnerable, and would be the kind of hurt that lent itself to blades and blood if Will laughed now.

“You wanted to be as good at fishing as I am at hunting?” Will asked, lips twitching. “Sorry. Sorry, you hid your injury because you thought you failing at fishing would- what? Make me disappointed in you? Make me rethink all my decisions up to this point because if you can’t stand in a river for five hours, should I really be fucking you, or have killed all those people for you? Hannibal. Hannibal.”

Will tugged Hannibal’s arm, pulling the man into bed with him, and grabbed the man’s face, forcing him to make eye contact.

“I- Will-“

Will cut him off with a kiss, pressing Hannibal into the pillows. He couldn’t control his laughter now, nearly giggling against Hannibal’s lips.

“Hannibal, you could fall into every river from here to the FBI headquarters and I wouldn’t think of leaving you. If I wanted someone good at fishing, I never would have left Louisiana.” Will peppered kisses between the words, covering Hannibal’s lips, neck, chest, hands.

One thing had to be made clear, though, before anything else. He pulled back, glaring at Hannibal hard.

“If you, for any reason, hide an injury from me again, I’m tipping the FBI off about where we are. Have fun finding another safe house, you asshole.”

Hannibal grinned at him, open and joyful, and pulled Will down into another kiss.

Stubborn asshole. Wonderful, ridiculous man. Will had gotten so lucky to have him., to keep him. Sprained ankle and fishing skills and all.

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